

"PATENT"

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

BEFORE THE EXAMINER:

J. A. Kendrick

C. Henderson, Jr.

Serial No.: Unassigned

Group Art Unit No.: 1713

(Divisional of 09/654,799)

Filed: December 18, 2001

Attorney Docket No.: 98B014/5

For: Continuous Slurry Polymerization Volatile Removal
Baytown, Texas

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

Please enter the following amendments prior to examination of the application.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

On page 1, please delete lines 9-11 and insert the following:

This application is a divisional application of Serial No. 09/654,799, filed September 5, 2000, now allowed, which is a continuation application of Serial No. 09/081, 392, filed May 18, 1998, now Patent No. 6,281,300, which claims the benefit of and priority to Serial No. 60/078,859, filed March 20, 1998, all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please add new claims 5-13 and cancel claims 1-4. A version with markings to show changes made appears at the end of this response in Appendix A.

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5. (new) A process comprising:

polymerizing at least one monomer in liquid diluent in a slurry reactor to produce a slurry of polymer solids in a liquid medium;

continuously discharging a portion of the slurry from the slurry reactor as polymerization effluent; and

flashing the polymerization effluent in a first flash to vaporize from about 50% to about 100% of the liquid in the polymerization effluent to produce concentrated polymer effluent and vaporized liquid;

wherein the rate of discharge of the polymerization effluent from the slurry reactor is such as to maintain constant pressure in the slurry reactor.

6. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the rate of discharge of the polymerization effluent is such as to eliminate intermittent high pressure pulses in the slurry reactor.

7. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the polymerization is conducted in a loop reactor.

8. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the concentrated polymer effluent and vaporized liquid are continuously separated.

9. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the concentrated polymer effluent is flashed in a second flash to vaporize liquid.

10. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the vaporized liquid from the first flash contains entrained polymer solids and is subjected to a separation to separate polymer solids from the vaporized liquid.

11. (new) The process of claim 8, wherein the resulting separated, vaporized liquid from the first flash is condensed by indirect heat exchange.

12. (new) The process of claim 9, wherein the vaporized liquid from the second flash contains entrained polymer solids and is subjected to a separation to separate polymer solids from the vaporized liquid.

13. (new) The process of claim 9, wherein the vaporized liquid from the second flash is condensed by compression.

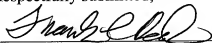
[illegible]

REMARKS

Claims 5-13 correspond to claims 8-16 of the parent application which were added after filing, and, subsequently, cancelled prior to allowance. Thus, no new matter has been added.

In light of the aforementioned amendments, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 5-13. Applicant invites the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney should the Examiner have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



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12/18/01
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APPENDIX A: CLAIMS MARKED-UP TO SHOW CHANGES

5. (new) A process comprising:
- polymerizing at least one monomer in liquid diluent in a slurry reactor to produce a slurry of polymer solids in a liquid medium;
- continuously discharging a portion of the slurry from the slurry reactor as polymerization effluent; and
- flashing the polymerization effluent in a first flash to vaporize from about 50% to about 100% of the liquid in the polymerization effluent to produce concentrated polymer effluent and vaporized liquid;
- wherein the rate of discharge of the polymerization effluent from the slurry reactor is such as to maintain constant pressure in the slurry reactor.
6. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the rate of discharge of the polymerization effluent is such as to eliminate intermittent high pressure pulses in the slurry reactor.
7. (new) The process of claim 5, wherein the polymerization is conducted in a loop reactor.
8. (new) The process of claim [7] 5, wherein the concentrated polymer effluent [slurry] and vaporized liquid are continuously separated.
9. (new) The process of claim [8] 5, wherein the concentrated polymer effluent [slurry] is flashed in a second flash to vaporize liquid.
10. (new) The process of claim [9] 5, wherein the vaporized liquid from the first flash contains entrained polymer solids and is subjected to a separation to separate polymer solids from the vaporized liquid.
11. (new) The process of claim [10] 8, wherein the resulting separated, vaporized liquid from the first flash is condensed by indirect heat exchange.

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12. (new) The process of claim [11] 9, wherein the vaporized liquid from the second flash contains entrained polymer solids and is subjected to a separation to separate polymer solids from the vaporized liquid.

13. (new) The process of claim [12] 9, wherein the vaporized liquid from the second flash is condensed by compression.

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